

defense program in a manner that encourages industrial participation by other nations. Demonstrating the important role played by our friends and allies, as part of our initial missile defense capabilities, the United States will seek agreement from the United Kingdom and Denmark to upgrade early-warning radars on their territory.

The new strategic challenges of the 21st century require us to think differently, but

they also require us to act. The deployment of missile defenses is an essential element of our broader efforts to transform our defense and deterrence policies and capabilities to meet the new threats we face. Defending the American people against these new threats is my highest priority as Commander in Chief and the highest priority of my administration.

Statement on the Resignation of Nick Calio as Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs

December 17, 2002

Nick Calio has been a valuable and trusted member of my administration since the day I took office. As my top staff representative on Capitol Hill, he has been at the center of major legislative victories, from landmark education reforms to historic tax relief for the American people. Members

of Congress have always been able to rely on Nick's integrity, forthrightness, and civility. I have been able to count on his good judgment, his energy, and his loyalty. He has given 2 years of faithful service, and he leaves with my gratitude and friendship.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir Voronin on U.S.-Moldovan Relations

December 17, 2002

We welcome the positive development and expansion of U.S.-Moldovan relations over the last 11 years. The relationship of our two countries is based on a shared commitment to promoting prosperity, freedom, and security in Moldova and throughout the region.

Together, we reaffirm our support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova, and underscore our determination to bring the Transnistrian separatist conflict to a peaceful resolution. We stress our continued commitment to the ongoing OSCE-led Transnistria talks and, in particular, to the

Kiev Document as the basis for negotiation of a lasting settlement.

We note and welcome the Russian Federation's intention to implement fully its commitments undertaken at the OSCE's Istanbul Summit by completing the withdrawal of its forces from the territory of Moldova by December 31, 2003. We urge Transnistria's authorities to support unconditionally this process. If the Transnistrian authorities continue systematically to create obstacles for the disposal or withdrawal of Russian ammunition and military equipment, we are prepared to consider together